ELL Reader

Genre	Build Background	Access Content	Extend Language
Fiction	• Gardening • Plants and Soil • Cooperation	• Captions and Labels • Definitions	• Verb Ending *-ed*

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Nana's Herb Garden



by Frances Ferrara Alvear
Illustrated by Susan Spellman





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Nana lived in Italy before she moved to New York City this year. She wanted to live with her son and his wife. She missed her granddaughters, Donna and Teresa.

The girls were very happy. They love Nana. Nana loves to cook spaghetti and meatballs. That's their favorite meal. The girls like to help Nana when she cooks.





One day Nana was sad. The girls asked her why she looked unhappy.

"Well," said Nana, "I love being here with you. I love cooking with you. I just miss my herb garden in Italy. It was always blooming at this time of year."



Donna and Teresa wanted to know what an herb garden is.

Nana told them that herbs are plants. People use herbs when they cook. Herbs add more flavor to food.

In Italy, when Nana cooked, she snipped parts of the herbs from the plants in her garden.

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flavor: taste **snipped:** cut off





Nana's herb garden in Italy





Parsley is an herb.



Basil is an herb.



The herbs Nana grew were parsley, basil, rosemary, and oregano. She used parsley and basil in her spaghetti sauce. She added rosemary when she cooked chicken. She used oregano in her soups.

Donna and Teresa were excited! They recognized the names of those kinds of herbs!



Rosemary is an herb.



Oregano is an herb.





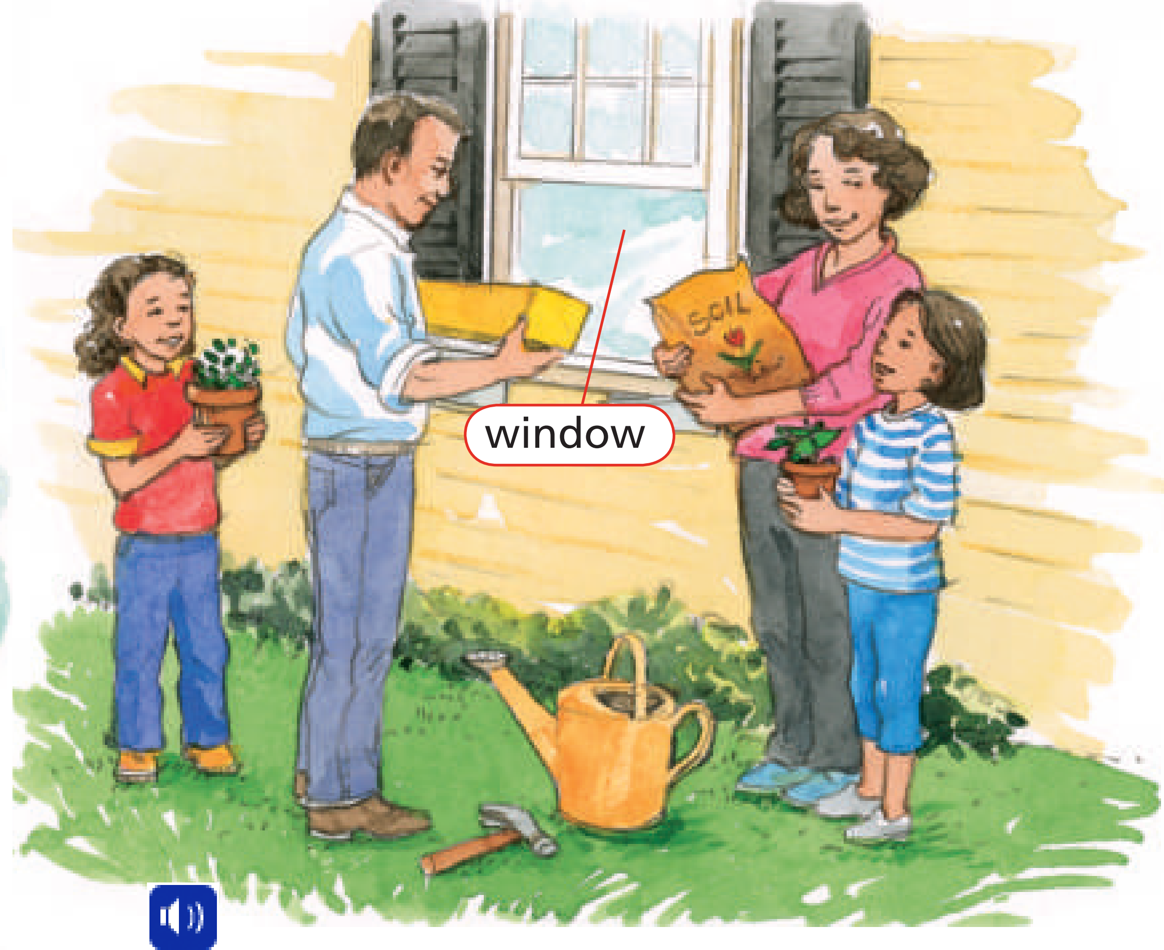


"We know those herbs, Nana!" they shouted.

"Mommy buys them in the supermarket. They come in plastic jars. We can get some for you."

"You're very sweet," said Nana. "Those are dried herbs. They don't taste as good as fresh ones. That's why I miss my herb garden so much."

supermarket: big grocery store





The girls decided to make an herb garden for Nana. They went to the garden store with their parents to buy a window box, a bag of soil, and herb seedlings.

Father put the window box outside the kitchen window. Mommy and the girls filled the box with soil. They planted the seedlings and showered them with water.

window box: a box for plants that hangs in a window
seedlings: tiny new plants (baby plants)





Nana was very surprised! Before long, new herbs were sprouting. The herbs grew tall and strong. Whenever Nana cooked, she snipped her fresh herbs.

Nana taught the girls how to cook. She taught them how to take care of plants.

Nana's little herb garden made the whole family happy!

What surprise would you like to make for someone special?





Talk About It

1. In this story, why was Nana sad one day?
2. What did the girls do to make her happy?

Write About It

3. In this story, Nana made her granddaughters' favorite food, spaghetti and meatballs. What is your favorite food? Write about it on a separate sheet of paper.

Extend Language

The verb ending *-ed* tells us that the action happened in the past. *Nana cooked dinner yesterday. The girls asked about a garden.* Can you find other *-ed* verbs in this story?

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